

**THOMSON-BRIDGWATER FAMILY PAPERS,  
1844-[1850–1900]-2002**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Thomson-Bridgwater Family Papers measure 3 cubic feet and span the years 1844 to 2002, with bulk dates ranging from 1850 to 1900. The unrestricted collection, donated by Dr. Robert Thomson, a family descendant, includes items originally belonging to Matthew Neill Thomson (1824-1891), William Parrish Thomson (1862-1940) and Emma Bridgwater (1859-1949), Richard Allen Bridgwater (1821-1875), and various other family members who resided in middle Tennessee during the mid to late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Several members of the family worked as farmers, including R. A. Bridgwater, who bred mules, but significantly, many were unusually well educated in music, the arts, literature, and other intellectual pastimes. Items in the collection include photographs of family members, including an intact family photo album, a family Bible, a scrapbook, autograph books, sheet music, letters, accounts and receipts, legal and estate papers, school records, and more. When the papers arrived, they were generally in very good condition, and had already been carefully organized by the donor, usually by date and creator. The collection was kept in its original order whenever possible. Materials not germane to the Thomson-Bridgwater Family Papers such as most of the books and some of the sheet music were removed from the collection; the sheet music was donated to the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. A fair number of the items are photocopies or transcriptions, but the majority of the collection is comprised of original papers.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Includes biographical essays written by Dr. Robert Polk Thomson on the following individuals:

- (1) Richard Allen Bridgwater (1821-1875) & Ann Methanius Seay (1835-1907) and their descendants (see Box 5, Folder 8)
- (2) William Seay Bridgwater (1862-1943) (see Box 5, Folder 7)
- (3) Nannie Martin Bridgwater (1858-1931) & George Van Buren Goodall (1860-1934) (see Box 5, Folder 6)
- (4) John Chambers Bridgwater (1864-1941) (see Box 5, Folder 4)
- (5) Neill Thomson (early 18<sup>th</sup> century) (see Box 5, Folder 3)
- (6) Moses Thomson (? – 1777) (see Box 5, Folder 2)
- (7) Cornelius (Neill) Thomson (1767-1825) (see Box 5, Folder 1)
- (8) Matthew Thomson (1773-1839) (see Box 5, Folder 5)
- (9) Haynie Thomson (1802-1865) (see Box 5, Folder 11)
- (10) Matthew Neill Thomson (1824-1891) (see Box 5, Folder 10)
- (11) William Parrish Thomson (1862-1940) & Emily Ann Bridgwater (1859-1949), also called Emma Bridgwater (see Box 5, Folder 9)
- (12) Genealogical chart for William Parrish Thomson (see Box 5, Folder 9)
- (13) Family group listing for Chesley Bridgwater (Nancy Chambers, spouse; couple had 13 children) (see Box 5, Folder 12)
- (14) Family group listing for Richard Allen Bridgwater (Ann Methanius Seay, spouse; couple had 12 children) (see Box 5, Folder 12)

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Thomson-Bridgwater Family Papers, 1844 – [1850–1900] – 2002, provide an intriguing glimpse into the lives of a well-educated family who settled in Middle Tennessee during the mid-nineteenth century. The collection is comprised of items belonging to Matthew Neill Thomson (1824–1891), who was born in Kentucky but eventually settled in Wilson County, Tennessee, and worked as a farmer. Thomson's son, William Parrish Thomson (1861–1940), married Emma Bridgwater Thomson (1859–1949), a woman characterized by her considerable education and love of music. In addition to this couple's items, the collection also includes the papers of Emma Bridgwater's father, Richard Allen Bridgwater (1821–1875). The collection is thus divided into items belonging to these four individuals mentioned above, but papers pertaining to many other family members are also included in the collection.

Donor Dr. Robert Polk Thomson, Emma's and William Parrish Thomson's grandson, carefully organized the Thomson-Bridgwater Family Papers, and this arrangement was kept whenever possible. Thomson divided up the collection into four basic sections, including the papers of Matthew Neil Thomson, William Parrish Thomson, Emma Bridgwater Thomson, and Richard Allen Bridgwater. He wrote detailed biographical sketches of these four family members, in addition to many others, including William Seay Bridgwater, Nannie Martin Bridgwater, George Van Buren Goodall, John Chambers Bridgwater, Neill Thomson, Moses Thomson, Cornelius Neill Thomson, Matthew Thomson, and Haynie Thomson. These narratives reflect Thomson's extensive knowledge of the collection as well as his own family history, and include many references to items included in these papers. Upon reading these essays, one is struck by the difficulty of daily life in the nineteenth century; many children die as youngsters, the Civil War wreaks havoc on the Thomson-Bridgwater family, and financial troubles continually plague the Thomson family, especially Haynie Thomson and his descendants. At the same time, happier times are also reflected in the papers. Affectionate letters from William Parrish Thomson to his wife, Emma, reveal the fondness they felt for one another. Items in the collection, such as an exquisite Victorian scrapbook belonging to Emma, also reflect the fruits of learning and love of culture that many family members enjoyed.

The collection is comprised of a variety of items, including photographs, letters, a family Bible, accounts, receipts, advertising flyers, legal papers, school papers, bankbooks, pocket memo books, and travel notes. The photographs are usually of family members, friends, houses, or school classes. The family photo album includes a number of family members with their names listed underneath their photographs. Some of the photographs have clearly been removed, but the remaining images, mostly cabinet cards, are in good condition. The album appears to have belonged to one of Emma Thomson's children. The letters in the collection are diverse, but tend to be addressed to one family member from another; in particular, there are countless letters to Emma Bridgwater from her husband, in addition to letters from her school friends.<sup>1</sup> There is also a great deal of incoming correspondence directed to R. A. Bridgwater, much of it from close family members. The Thomson-Bridgwater family also saved a number of special invitations and wedding announcements. Some of the correspondence records unusual family moments, such as a letter from W. P. Thomson to his wife Emma describing an Ouiji Board that the family had acquired. He explains how it actually functions (electricity from one's hands) and then proceeds

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<sup>1</sup> In most cases the letters have been arranged by Robert Polk Thomson according to date and recipient, although this is not true in every instance. This order was kept whenever possible. The number listed in parenthesis before the date represents the number of items present. Accordingly, when no number is listed, only one item exists. For a partial list of correspondents compiled by Dr. Robert Thomson, see Box 5, Folder 16.

to repeat some of the questions that he had asked the board. Thomson's fascination with this "machine" and how to use it is evident, and provides an interesting window into daily life in 1891 (See Box 3, Folder 12).

The Thomson-Bridgwater Family Papers also includes legal papers, such as wills, deeds, bills of sale, including a slave sale of Nelson, an African-American male thought to be around 35 years old, for R. A. Bridgwater (see Box 4, folder 1), and bonds for title. Receipts, accounts, and bankbooks are also present in the collection. Many of these items concern businesses that deal with horses and mules. R. A. Bridgwater's farm operation centered around his business of breeding mules. M. N. Thomson, his father, and his brothers were stock traders, active throughout the Southeast, and their farming activity was to grow food for the animals they traded or sent to markets in the plantation South. They were farmers of a distinctive variety; the material in the collection helps to document the role of stock trading and production in Tennessee agriculture, an area often neglected in the current historical literature.<sup>2</sup> Finally, as many family members received a good education, or were involved with teaching as a career, a fair number of school records are included. Report cards, school essays or poems, diplomas, grading records, school notes, school exercise books, and commencement programs belonging to various family members are also a part of the collection. Emma Bridgwater was a student of music and later even taught music lessons. A box of sheet music and a piano lesson book (signed by Emma in 1882) is included in the collection as well. Unfortunately, much of the sheet music is tattered and requires delicate handling. Popular songs and sentimental ballads from the United States in addition to Europe have been preserved, as have American songs reflecting stereotypical attitudes about African-Americans, such as George Cohen's popular tune, "When My Lize Rolls the Whites of Her Eyes."<sup>3</sup> Finally, the collection contains a few miscellaneous items, such as advertising flyers of horses for sale and autograph books from Emma's years at Soule College in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The majority of the items in the collection are original, although most of M. N. Thomson's papers are photocopies. Dr. Robert Thomson has transcribed some of the items in the Thomson-Bridgwater Family Papers. For instance, R. A. Bridgwater traveled to West Tennessee, Louisiana, and Texas during 1852-1853. He recorded some of his daily expenses, mileage, and experiences in his journal (see Box 4, folder 15 for the original, and for the transcription, see Box 4, folder 1). His observations are brief, but they do reflect the hazards and difficulties of travel in America in the mid-nineteenth century; Bridgwater even writes of a horse falling overboard on a steamer. Likewise, he frequently writes of the lameness of his horse and the poor road conditions.

The Thomson-Bridgwater Family Papers provide researchers with a fascinating glimpse into rural life in middle Tennessee (in particular, Smith County, Wilson County, Sumner County, and Rutherford County) from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. Because of the family's interest in education and culture, their records reflect aspects of American culture that were not always available to rural families in the South.

\*Special Note: Several items were added to the collection at a later date, and have not been microfilmed. In these cases, a note will be made in the container list specifying what has not been microfilmed.

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<sup>2</sup> Researchers interested in horses and farming may want to examine Robert Stewart's book, *The American Farmer's Horse-Book*, which had belonged to M. N. Thomson, and is now a part of the Thomson-Bridgwater Family Papers (housed in TSLA's library).

<sup>3</sup> "Dar's a colored gal, her name is Liza/Goodness gracious how I prize her,/She's a great big tantalizer,/Sweet as she can be,/Dar's prettier coons than me and bigger,/But with Lize they cut no figure,/For she only loves one nigger/And that nigger's me" (See Box 6).

## CONTAINER LIST

### **Box 1: Matthew Neill Thomson Family Correspondence and other family papers, circa 1845-1859 (photocopies, some are transcribed)**

#### **Folder 1**

N. T. Tribble to M. N. Thomson (1846)  
Photograph of Matthew Neil Thomson, I (copy, original Box 9, #17)  
G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (2 items) (1844)  
G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (1845)  
G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (1846)  
G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (2) (1847)  
G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (2) (1848)  
Diploma to Elizabeth J. Nelson (1848)  
Photograph of Elizabeth Jane Nelson (copy, original Box 9, #4)  
William Fry to M. N. Thomson (1848)  
Parrish (?) to Elizabeth Jane Nelson (1849?)

#### **Folder 2**

G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (2) (1850)  
J. Poindexter to M. N. Thomson (1850)  
G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (2) (1850)  
G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (1851)  
L. M. Owen to E. J. Nelson (1851)  
W. A. Lindsay to M. N. Thomson (1851)

#### **Folder 3**

G. C. Ware to M. N. Thomson (2) (1851)  
Song written by Judge Squeakle of Florida (no date)  
M. N. Thomson to E. J. Thomson (1852)  
A. Thomson to M. N. or S. P. Thomson (1852)  
Photograph of the home of James Nelson II (copy, original Box 9, #16)  
Photograph of Jas. Nelson II (copy, original Box 9, #15)  
J. Nelson to M. N. Thomson (1853)  
Photograph of home (copy, original Box 9, #10)  
A. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1853)  
J. Nelson to M. N. and E. J. Thomson (1853)

#### **Folder 4**

J. Nelson, Jr. to M. N. Thomson (1854)  
A. Nelson to E. J. Thomson (1854)

#### Genealogical note

J. Nelson, Sr. to M. N. Thomson (1854)  
A. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1854)  
J. Nelson, Sr. to E. J. Thomson (1854)  
A. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1854)  
A. Nelson to E. J. Thomson (undated, probably 1854 or 1855)  
A. Nelson to E. J. Thomson (1855)  
J. Nelson, Sr. to M. N. Thomson (1855)  
A. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (3) (1855)  
M. N. Thomson to E. J. Thomson (1855)

#### Folder 5

Incoming account note to M. N. Thomson (1855)  
Andrew Thomson's will (1853)  
Photograph of S. P. Thomson & wife, E. A. Halley (copy, original in Box 9, #14)  
S. P. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1856)  
Guardian contract for J. Faulkner with J. W. Walker (1855)  
H. Thomson to M. N. and E. J. Thomson (1857)  
S. P. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1857)  
M. N. Thomson to H. Thomson (1857)

#### Folder 6

R. Nelson to M. N. Thomson (1858)  
J. Nelson to M. N. Thomson (1858)  
Invitation to a picnic to M. Thompson & Lady (1858)  
J. Nelson, Sr. to M. N. Thomson (1858)  
J. W. Walker to M. N. Thomson (1858)  
R. G. Wood to M. N. Thomson (2) (1858)  
Account with men of Paint Lick (undated)  
M. N. Thomson to E. J. Thomson (1859)  
J. H. G. Bush to M. N. Thomson (1859)  
M. N. Thomson to E. J. Thomson (1859)  
J. H. G. Bush to M. N. Thomson (1859)  
J. Nelson, Jr. to M. N. Thomson (1859)  
S. P. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1859)

#### Folder 7

*In Memoriam* poem published in the *Nashville Banner* (no date)  
R. G. Wood to M. N. Thomson (1860)  
J. W. Nelson to E. J. Thomson (1860)  
D. H. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1860)

J. Nelson, Sr. to M. N. and E. J. Thomson (1860)  
A. Parrish to E. J. Thomson (1860)  
P. Tribble to J. Nelson, Jr. (1860)  
J. Nelson, Sr. to M. N. Thomson (1860)  
Accounts (1860, 1864)  
J. Nelson, Sr. to M. N. Thomson (1861)  
D. W. Parrish to M. N. Thomson (1861)  
J. Nelson, Sr. to E. J. Thomson (1861)  
Cutter & Gleaves Account with M. N. Thomson (1863)  
J. Nelson, Sr. to E. J. Thomson (1863)

## **Folder 8**

D. W. Parrish to M. N. Thomson (1864)  
G. B. Nelson to E. J. Thomson (1864)  
J. N. Thomson's account with J. & L. Pick (invoice for goods) & J. Nelson's prisoner of war document from Camp Douglas, Nashville, Tennessee, 4<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Cavalry (1864)  
M. N. Thomson's account with J. & L. Pick (1864)  
Permit for family and plantation supplies to M. N. Thomson (1865)  
J. Nelson to M. N. Thomson (1865)  
J. W. Nelson to M. N. Thomson (1865)  
E. B. Reed to E. J. Thomson (1865)  
Form letter regarding General R. Hatton (1865)  
E. J. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1866)  
License as cattle broker from U.S. Internal Revenue to M. N. Thomson (1866)  
Ornamental hair plaiting work advertising flyer to M. N. Thomson (no date)  
E. J. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1866)  
J. Laskey to E. J. Thomson (1866)  
M. N. Thomson to E. J. Thomson (1866)  
E. J. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (3) (1866)  
D. W. Parrish to M. N. Thomson (1866)  
W. H. Nelson to E. J. Thomson with enclosure from R. Nelson to M. N. Thomson (1866)  
S. P. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1866)  
Incoming correspondence to M. N. Thomson (1866)  
Bankruptcy notice of S. P. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1867)

## **Folder 9**

G. B. Nelson to E. J. Thomson (1869)  
E. J. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1869)  
Photograph of Matthew Neil Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #11)  
M. N. Thomson to E. J. Thomson (1869)  
G. B. Nelson to J. Nelson, Jr. (1870)  
M. N. Thomson to E. J. Thomson (1872)  
E. M. Neal account with M. N. Thomson (1872)



E. J. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1873)  
M. N. Thomson to E. J. Thomson (1873)  
Photocopy of a photograph of John Page, employee of M. N. Thomson (no date, no original)  
J. Nelson, Jr. to M. N. Thomson (1873)  
G. D. Griffin to M. N. Thomson (1873)  
Southern Stockyard Company, Printed notice (1873)  
G. D. Griffin to M. N. Thomson (1873)  
G. D. Griffin to M. N. Thomson (2) (1874)  
F. A. Thompson to M. N. or S. P. Thomson (1874)  
Big Springs Seminary report card for R. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1875)

## **Folder 10**

G. B. Nelson to M. N. Thomson (1877)  
Masonic Lodge membership certificate for M. N. Thomson (1879)  
A. D. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1879)  
Newspaper clippings, postal card to S. Thomson, and livestock announcement (1870s)  
F. Nelson to M. N. and E. J. Thomson (1879)  
A. Parrish to M. N. Thomson (1879)  
A. Parrish to E. J. Thomson (187?)  
F. Nelson to E. J. Thomson (1880)  
Shiloh Academy picnic invitation, hosts include Thomson family members (1880)  
Account receipt to pay \$1,070 to Thomson family members (1884)  
G. B. Nelson to M. N. Thomson (1886)  
R. W. Thomson to W. P. Thomson (1887)  
M. N. Thomson to B. B. Taylor (1889)  
M. N. Thomson to G. N. Thomson (1890)  
S. P. Thomson to G. N. Thomson (?) (1890)  
S. P. Thomson to M. N. Thomson (1890)

## **Folder 11**

M. N. Thomson to W. P. Thomson (1891)  
M. N. Thomson to W. P. Thomson (1891) and a telegram to W. P. Thomson (1891)  
G. N. Thomson to W. P. Thomson (2) 1891)  
E. J. Thomson's will (1901)  
John W. Price & Co. flyer (no date)  
S. P. Thomson's school essay (no date)  
Untitled fragment of school paper (no date)  
Nelly Bly poem (no date)  
Fragment of a school essay signed by S. Thomson (no date)  
Poem, untitled (no date)  
Friendship essay, unsigned, but may be R. Thomson's handwriting (no date)  
Essay about mud, signed by R. Thomson (no date)

Photograph of home (copy, original in Box 9, #9)  
Photograph of M. N. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #8)  
Photograph of E. N. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #7)  
Photograph M. N. Thomson & bride A. E. Turner (copy, original in Box 9, #12)  
Photograph of E. K. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #2)  
Photograph of G. N. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #5)  
Photograph of Dr. R. W. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #26)  
Photograph of S. P. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #23)  
Photograph of M. N. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #21)  
Photograph of J. N. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #3)  
Photograph of J. Nelson, III (copy, original in Box 9, #1)  
Photograph of E. Boan (copy, original in Box 9, #19)  
Photograph of A. D. Thomson (copy, original in Box 9, #18)  
Group photograph of Thomson family members and others (copy, original in Box 9, #20)

**Folder 12 (original document)**

Pye's hat store account receipt for S. Thomson (1864)

**Box 2: Emma Bridgwater's correspondence 1880-1886 (with Sam Martin Young and others) and other materials (original documents)**

**Folder 1**

Letters to E. Bridgwater from Sam M. Y. (3) (1880)

**Folder 2**

Letters to E. Bridgwater from Sam M. Y. (6) (1881)

**Folder 3**

Letters to E. Bridgwater from Sam M. Y. in addition to attached poem (2) (1885)

**Folder 4**

Letter to E. Bridgwater from Sam M. Y. (1886)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater from Sam M. Y. (no year listed)  
Note to E. Bridgwater from Sam M. Y. (1882)  
Newspaper clipping about a classroom incident  
Unidentifiable two-page letter

**Folder 5**

Letters to E. Bridgwater from Bertha Bryan (3) (1884)

## **Folder 6**

Letter to E. Bridgwater from Bertha (1885)

Letter (fragment) to E. Bridgwater from Bertha (?) (1885)

Birthday note or essay for Professor S. S. W. (1885)

## **Folder 7**

Letter and poem to E. Bridgwater from C. Bogart (?) (no date)

Letter to E. Bridgwater from unknown individual (1886)

## **Folder 8**

Treatise on “Womans Claim to Higher Culture” in E. Bridgwater’s possession, written by J. Tiller (1875)

## **Folder 9**

Items found in E. Bridgwater’s books, includes newspaper article on women, grammar sheet, calendar sheets, spring cleaner advertisement, and horse colic treatment guidelines

## **Folder 10**

E. Bridgwater’s geometry & drawing sketchbook

## **Folder 11**

E. Bridgwater’s autograph book from Soule College, 1870s and 1880s

## **Folder 12**

E. Bridgwater’s autograph book from Soule College, 1870s and 1880s

## **Folder 13**

E. Bridgwater’s bankbooks, pocket memo books, receipts, calling cards, maple biscuit recipe, school exercise book for German lessons, school grading records, etc.

## **Folder 14**

E. Bridgwater’s bank books, receipts, cards, school grading records, Soule College school notes, school play, etc.

## **Folder 15**

Emma Thomson's will written on a note card (1941) (not microfilmed)

## **Folder 16**

Sympathy notes from Emma Thomson's funeral (3) (1949) (not microfilmed)

## **Folder 17**

Emma Thomson's funeral register (1949) (not microfilmed)

## **Box 3: William Parrish Thomson Family Correspondence, 1878-1888 & 1893-1940s** **(photocopies and original documents)**

### **Folder 1**

Soule College Commencement Exercises (1878)

Soule College tuition receipt (1878)

Soule College tuition receipt (1877-8)

"Lady Byrons farewell to Lord B" poem (1880)

Cash Accounts lists (1880)

E. Bridgwater's receipts (1882)

E. Bridgwater's receipts (1884)

E. Bridgwater's receipts (1883)

E. Bridgwater's teaching and payment agreement (1883)

Assorted invitations (1884-1885)

Assorted family letters (1884-1886)

Wedding invitation for E. Wade & R. W. Thomson (1884)

W. P. Thomson's bills, notes, & receipts (5 items) (1884)

W. P. Thomson's bills notes, & receipts (14 items) (1885)

Bellwood Academy music program brochure (1885)

Bellwood Academy program of music exercises (1886)

Letter to S. Thomson (1886)

Letters to Willie Thomson (2) (1886)

Letter to Willie Thomson from J. Harris (1886)

Maple Hill Seminary music program (1886)

Letter to Willie Thomson (1886)

Letter to W. P. Thomson (1886)

Notes to E. Bridgwater (1886)  
Letter to W. Thomson from E. Bridgwater (1886)  
Form letter to W. Thomson from agricultural paper (1886)  
Note to W. Thomson (1886)

## **Folder 2**

Assorted family letters, notes, receipts, and related items (1886)  
W. P. Thomson and E. Bridgwater's marital contract (1887)  
Wilson County Trust Deed (E. Bridgwater & W. P. Thomson) (1886)  
W. P. Thomson's bills, notes, & receipts (19) (1886)

## **Folder 3**

Letter to W. P. Thomson from F. M. Nelson (1887)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson (1887)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson (1887)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson (1887)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson (1889)  
Note to E. Bridgwater Thomson (1887)  
Letters to E. Bridgwater Thomson (2) (1887)  
Letters to W. P. Thomson (2) (1887)  
Payment agreement written by W. P. Thomson (1887)  
Note to E. Bridgwater Thomson from W. P. Thomson (1887)  
Assorted notes, letters, and receipts (10) (1887-1888)  
*The Weekly American* information and receipt (1888)  
W. P. Thomson & E. Bridgwater Thomson's bills, notes, & receipts (14) (1887)

## **Folder 4**

Letters to W. P. Thomson from A. Thomson (2) (1888)  
Letter to A. D. Thomson from W. R. Chambers (1888)  
Recipes for W. P. Thomson (2) (1888)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from "Sister E" (1888)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from A. Thomson (1888)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson (1888)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from Mrs. V. A. Tiller (?) (1888)  
Wilson County summons to W. P. Thomson (1888)  
Thomson family receipts (2 items) (1888)  
Letters to E. Bridgwater Thomson from W. P. Thomson (3) (1888)  
W. P. Thomson's answer to Bill of Complaint (4 pages) (1887)  
Thomson family receipts (26 items) (1888)

## **Folder 5**

Letter to "Bub" from M. Bridgwater (1893)  
Letter to "Old Nick" from M. Bridgwater (1893)  
Letter to "Bud" from M. Bridgwater (1893)  
Letter to "Bud" from M. Bridgwater (1893)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from W.M. Ramsey & Co. (1893)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater from W. S. Bridgwater (1893)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from W. Winstead (boot and shoe sales) (1893)  
Post office registry receipt (1899)  
W. P. Thomson's account papers (2 sheets) (1893)  
Receipt signed by W. P. Thomson (1892)  
Newspaper clipping (no date)  
Letter to "Brother" from M. Bridgwater (1893)

## **Folder 6**

Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from her brother (1894)  
Assorted accounts, notes, and receipts (4) (1894)  
Indenture involving W. Thomson (1895) & payment agreements (1895-1896)  
Letter to Mrs. A. Bell from unknown individual (1895)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from V. Bell (1895)  
Written agreement concerning land between V. Bell and W. P. Thomson (1895)

## **Folder 7**

Letter addressed to "my dear friend" from "Lou" (?) (1900)  
Letters to E. Bridgwater Thomson from W. P. Thomson (3) (1900)  
Note to Willette B. Thomson from S. Berry, her teacher (1901)  
Essay entitled "The Two Mills" (circa 1900)  
Letter to "Mamma" from W. B. Thomson (1902)  
Letters to Willette B. Thomson from A. Harlan (2) (1906)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from unknown person (1903)  
Commencement program for University of Nashville and Peabody College (1906)  
Postcard to E. Bridgwater from H. Thomson (1908)  
Peabody College commencement programs and recommendations for L. Thomson (1911-1914)  
Photograph of 6<sup>th</sup> grade geography class at Hendersonville (copy, original in Box 9, #22)  
Photograph of Hendersonville School (copy, original in Box 9, #25)  
Willette Bridgwater Thomson's wedding announcement with T. G. Neal (1918)

Postcard to T. G. Neal from M. Bridgwater (1926)  
Letter to "Bob" (?) from "PaPa" (W. P. Thomson) (1940)  
Letter from E. Thomson to L. Thomson (1940)  
Letter from "Mother" (?) (no date)

### **Folder 8**

Letter (written as a poem) to Mrs. W. P. Thomson from E. N. Roney (1943)  
One letter & one letter fragment to Bobby Thomson from Japanese Americans (Diane Moriguchi, W. R. A. Gila River Project, Rivers, Arizona & Mrs. Hatsu Yamatode from Rivers, Arizona) who were in World War II internment camps; Thomson's church asked its young people to send care packages to Japanese Americans in internment camps (2) (1942?)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (1940)  
Letter (fragments) to L. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (no date)  
Letter to L. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (no date)  
Letter to L. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (no date)  
Newspaper clippings (1940s?)  
Letter to L. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (1945?)  
Postcard to Mrs. Neal from L. Thomson (no date)

### **Folder 9**

Receipts (13) (1888-1890)

### **Folder 10**

Envelopes & postcards (30)

### **Folder 11**

Letter from L. Head (1890?)  
Letters to E. B. Thomson & daughter from W. P. Thomson (2) (1890)  
Letters to E. B. Thomson from R. E. Donnelly (2) (1890)  
Letter to Emma from "Aunt Eliza" (1890)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson & children from W. P. Thomson (includes note from J. C. Bridgwater (1890)  
W. P. Thomson's accounts & receipts (9) (1890)  
Letter fragment from L. Head (no date)  
Wilson County voter registration certificates for W. P. Thomson (2) (1890)  
Recipe for peppermint sticks (no date)  
Medical treatments for livestock (3) (no date)

## **Folder 12**

Letter of recommendation for E. B. Thomson (music teacher) from F. M. Puryear (no date)  
To W. P. Thomson from M. N. Thomson (1891)  
Letter to "Bro" from "your affect. Bro" (1891)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from H. Blair (?) (1891)  
Letter of recommendation for E. B. Thomson from H. Blair (?) (1893)  
Postcard to E. Bridgwater Thomson from W. P. Thomson (1869)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from L. Bridgwater (sister) (1891)  
Letter to E. B. Thomson from W. P. Thomson (1891)  
Note to W. P. Thomson from G. Thomson (1891)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from W. P. Puryear (1891)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from D. Mills (1891)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (1891)  
Rental agreement between W. L. Franklin and W. P. Thomson (1891)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (1891) (includes note from Willette)  
Business agreement between W. P. Thomson & D. Mills regarding Mills & Co. (1891)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from W. P. Thomson (1891)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from D.G. Jackson (1891)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (1891)  
Letters to W. P. Thomson from D.H. Thomson (2) (1891)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from George (brother) (1891)  
Letter to "Bro" from E. Thomson (?) (no date)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson and daughters from W. P. Thomson (1891)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from W. P. Thomson (1891)  
Letters to W. P. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (2) (1891)  
Letters to E. Bridgwater Thomson from W. P. Thomson (2) (1891)  
Note to W. P. Thomson (?) from E. Bridgwater Thomson (1891)  
Note to W. P. Thomson from Willette Thomson (1891)  
Note (no name, no date)  
Accounts & receipts (6) (1891)  
Land deed from J. & E. Law to E. Bridgwater Thomson (1892)

## **Folder 13**

Letters to "Bro" from "Katharyne" (?) (2) (no date)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (1892)  
Letter to Willette from "Aunt Er" (no date)



Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from L. Bridgwater (sister) (1892)  
Letter to "Bro" from E. Thomson (?) (1892)  
Letters to E. Bridgwater Thomson from W. P. Thomson (3) (1892)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from E. Bridgwater Thomson (1892)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from R. Thomson (1895?)  
Letter to W. P. Thomson from W. L. Franklin (1892)  
W. P. Thomson's receipts (1892)  
Photograph (photocopy, no original included) of an old man, could be W. P. Thomson (no date)

#### **Folder 14**

Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from N. M. Bridgwater (1889)  
Letter to "Bro" from J. N. Thomson (1889)  
Letter to "Friend" from D. Ruthand (1889)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from L. Bridgwater (sister) (1889)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from "Sister E" (1889?)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from J. C. Bridgwater (1889)  
Letter to E. Bridgwater Thomson from "Aunt Eliza" (1889)  
Letter to Eliza from E. Bridgwater Thomson (1889)  
Accounts & receipts (17) (1889)  
Bay stallion advertisement (1887)

#### **Box 4: Richard A. Bridgwater's Family Papers**

##### **Folder 1**

Accounts, receipts, sales agreements, including a slave sales agreement (1846-1849) (includes transcriptions)  
Transcriptions of R. A. Bridgwater's travels (1852-1853) (18 pages)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from J. P. Martin (1852)  
Receipts (4) (1854)  
Transcription notes (no date)

##### **Folder 2**

Note to R. A. Bridgwater from "R. Geamandte" (?) (1854)  
Agricultural figures and updates (published information from the 1850s)  
Genealogical chart and information concerning Goodall family  
Letter from A. Seay (?) to R. Goodall (1853?)  
Letters to A. Bridgwater from R. Goodall (7) (1854)  
Note to A. Bridgwater from R. Goodall (no date)  
Letter to A. Bridgwater from N. E. Martin (1854)  
Notes and letters to R. Bridgwater (9) (1855)  
Letter to "My Dear Sister" from Emily Cryer (1855)  
Letter to A. Bridgwater from R. Goodall (1855)

Letter to "My Beloved Friend" from R. Goodall (1855)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from S. S. Dawson (1855)  
Note to R. A. Bridgwater from S. Bridgwater (1855)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from "C. M. B" (?) (1855)

### **Folder 3**

Accounts & receipts (4) (1855)  
Note from S. S. Dawson and accounts & receipts (12)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from H. Martin (1856)  
Photocopied notes & receipt (1856-1860 or no date)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (1856)  
Deed (J. K. Howard to R. A. Bridgwater)  
Surveying notes (2) (1854)  
Accounts & receipts (8) (1855-1856)  
Note to R. A. Bridgwater from "H. B." (1856)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from C. W. Bridgwater (?) (1856)  
Letter to "Bro" from C. W. Bridgwater (?) (1856)  
Letter to "Cousin Daniel" from "J. Algood" (?) (1856)

### **Folder 4**

Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from J. Seay (1857)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from W. Martin (?) (1857)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater (?) from S. S. Dawson (?) (1857)  
Letter to R. Bridgwater from J. Seay (1857)  
Letter to R. Bridgwater from S. S. Dawson (1857)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from W. Y. Martin (1857)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from W. Y. Martin (no date, could be 1856)  
Letters to R. A. Bridgwater from C. W. Bridgwater (2) (1857)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from W. Y. Martin (1857)  
Note from W. W. Seay (?) (no date)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from W. Y. Martin (1858)  
"Black Prince" jack advertisement & note to R. A. Bridgwater from J. Y. Blythe (?) (1850s)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from C. W. Bridgwater (1858)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from W. Y. Martin (1858)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from J. Algood (?) (1858)  
Letter to Richard from J. C. Bridgwater (?) (1858)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from R. J. Meigs (1856)  
Appletree list (1858)  
Note to W. W. Seay (?) from J. Fatwan (?) (1858)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from J. Algood (?) (1858)  
Letter to J. Algood (?) (1858)  
Wilson County court document (?) concerning W. W. Seay (no date)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from W. G. Maclou (?) (1859)

Letter to A. Ward from R. A. Bridgwater (1859)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from C. W. Bridgwater (1859)  
Letters to R. A. Bridgwater from W. Y. Martin (2) (1859)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from S. S. Dawson (1859)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from S. Allison (?) (no date)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from C. L. Kirksong (?) (1859)  
Letter to "Pa" from W. A. Seay (?) (1859)  
Letter to "Ann" from "Caroline" (sister) (1860)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from W. Y. Martin (1860)

## **Folder 5**

Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from T. Martin (2) (1860)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from I. C. Bridgwater (?) (brother) (1860)  
Letter to T. C. Martin (?) from A. Smith & L. Phelps (?) (1860)  
Letter to "Pa" from unknown individual (1861?)  
Letter to "Eliza" from "L. B." (?) (1863?)  
Letter to R. Bridgwater from J. Malone (1866)  
Letter to A. Bridgwater from V. H. Seay (1866)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from C. B. Cryer and one other individual  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from T. Martin (?) (1866)  
Letter to Mrs. A. M. Bridgwater from "Emily" (sister)(1867)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from M. M. Sawyer (?) (1869)  
Letter to "My Dear Bro" from E. C. Martin (?) (1869)  
Letter to R. A. Bridgwater from J. H. Oney (includes business card) (1869)  
R. A. Bridgwater's note concerning where his books will go upon his death (1870)  
Letter to A. Bridgwater from W. W. Seay (1873?)  
Letter to A. Bridgwater from E. C. Martin (1873)  
Letters to A. Bridgwater from E. C. Martin (2) (1873)  
Fragment of a letter from E. C. Martin (no date)  
Letters to A. M. Bridgwater from E. C. Martin (2 sheets) (1874)  
Letter to Emily from R. A. Bridgwater (1874)  
Receipt signed by S. Stephens (1876)  
Letter to A. Bridgwater from H. M. Cryer (nephew) (1878)

## **Folder 6**

Copy of bill (E. Martin vs. T. C. Martin) (1867)  
Bill of sale, C. Bridgwater to R. A. Bridgwater, Smith County court document (1852)  
Bond for title, R. A. Bridgwater (1855)  
Bond for a title to a tract of land, R. A. Bridgwater (1855)  
Land deed, L. Bridgwater and M. Bridgwater (1909)  
Family accounts & receipts (30 items) (1854–1878)

## **Folder 7**

Family accounts & receipts (includes business receipts, tax receipts, & magazine subscription receipts for *The Weekly Republican Banner*, *The Southern Christian Advocate*, *Tennessee Farmer & Mechanic*, & *Southern Homestead*) (59 items) (1855-1870)  
Fisher, Wheless, & Company's *Prices Current* (2 issues) (1858)  
Manufacturing certificate, Family Right for the Sun-Light Oil, R. A. Bridgwater (1870)

## **Folder 8**

Estate papers to T. J. Seay from A. M. Seay Bridgwater (1878)  
Processing notice, land surveying concerning A. Bridgwater's property in the 8<sup>th</sup> Civil District of Wilson County (1887)  
Family accounts & receipts (59 items) (1870-1890)

## **Folder 9**

Walnut Grove Academy announcement brochure (1889-1890)  
Maple Hill Seminary closing exercises invitation (no date)  
Gospel lesson card with picture of Christ (Revelation 21:7) (1941)  
Family accounts & receipts (55 items) (1880 – 1921)

## **Folder 10**

Letter to F. W. Neal from W. Thomson (1917)  
Wall border design pattern (1921?)  
Ceiling design pattern (no date)  
Letter to N. F. Bridgwater from W. Thomson (1916)  
Letter to Mattie Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (1941)  
Letter to N. F. Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (1937)  
Letter to Mattie Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (1921)  
Letter to Mattie Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (1908)  
Letter to Mattie Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (1909)  
Letter to Willie from J. C. Bridgwater (1906)  
Letter to "Ma" from J. C. Bridgwater (1904)  
Letters to Mattie Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (2) (1904)  
Letter to Mattie Bridgwater from A.M. Bridgwater (1903)  
Letter to Mattie Bridgwater from A.M. Bridgwater (1904)  
Peabody Normal College commencement invitation (1900)  
Letter to Mattie Bridgwater from J. C. Bridgwater (1899)  
Letters to Mattie Bridgwater from A.M. Bridgwater (2) (1899)

R. A. Bridgewater's (1821-1875) gravestone receipt (1897)  
Group photograph of family members (copy, original in Box 9, #24)  
Letter to Mattie Bridgewater from A.M. Bridgewater (1896)  
Photograph of Lola Ruth (copy, original in Box 9, #6)  
Letter to E. J. Bridgewater & N. M. Bridgewater from A. M. Seay Bridgewater (1885)  
Basket picnic invitation (1886)  
Essay on "Beauties of Nature" by W. S. Bridgewater (?) (no date)  
Essay on "My Saturday Trip" by W. S. Bridgewater (?) (no date)  
Letter to Willie from A. Bridgewater (?) (1882)  
Letter to Willie from N. M. Bridgewater (1882)  
Letter to Willie from E. J. & A. M. Bridgewater (1882)  
Postcard to W. Bridgewater from E. Bridgewater (1881)  
Blair family wedding ceremony invitation (1882)  
Two letter fragments, one from E. Bridgewater and the other from N. Bridgewater Goodall (no dates)  
Letter to E. Bridgewater from A.M.Bridgewater (1881)  
Letter to "Brother" from unknown individual (1881)  
Bridgewater family receipts (4) (1879-1885)  
Husband's twelve commandments (concerning proper wifely behavior) from wife (L. Wallace) to husband (W. S. Bridgewater)

#### **Folder 11**

Pedigree horse advertisement (1856)

#### **Folder 12**

Financial notes (leather pocketbook) (1850s)

#### **Folder 13**

Horse & jack records (leather pocketbook) (1860s, 1870s)

#### **Folder 14**

Financial & estate records (leather notebook) (1860s)

#### **Folder 15**

Financial & other records, including travel notes (leather pocketbook) (1850s)

#### **Folder 16**

Financial and other notes (small leather pocketbook) (1850s)

## **Folder 17**

Miscellaneous items originally found in small leather pocketbook from folder 16, includes calling cards, newspaper clippings, etc.

## **Box 5: Thomson-Bridgwater Family Research Findings & Other Family Items**

### **Folder 1**

Biographical essay on Cornelius (Neill) Thomson (1767-1825)

### **Folder 2**

Biographical essay on Moses Thomson (? – 1777)

### **Folder 3**

Biographical essay on Neill Thomson (early 18<sup>th</sup> century)

### **Folder 4**

Biographical essay on John Chambers Bridgwater (1864-1941)

### **Folder 5**

Biographical essay on Matthew Thomson (1773-1839)

### **Folder 6**

Biographical essay on Nannie Martin Bridgwater (1858-1931) & George Van Buren Goodall (1860-1934)

### **Folder 7**

Biographical essay on William Seay Bridgwater (1862-1943)

### **Folder 8**

Biographical essay on Richard Allen Bridgwater (1821-1875) & Ann Methanius Seay (1835-1907) and their descendants

## **Folder 9**

Biographical essay on William Parrish Thomson (1862-1940) & Emily Ann Bridgwater (1859-1949), includes genealogical chart

## **Folder 10**

Biographical essay on Matthew Neill Thomson (1824-1891)

## **Folder 11**

Biographical essay on Haynie Thomson (1802-1865)

## **Folder 12**

Bridgwater family genealogical information

## **Folder 13**

*The Chanticleer* (Goodlettsville High School yearbook) (1930)

## **Folder 14**

Photograph of a young girl (copy, original in Box 9, #27)

Music program (no date)

New Year card to L. Thomson from W. P. Thomson (1900)

Biblical image and accompanying text (Luke 2:11)

Photographic negative of a woman outside (copy, negative in general vault collection, Box 1, VII-D-3v)

Silver card decorated with birds

Newspaper obituary, L. Bridgwater (1933)

Photograph of Mattie Bridgwater (copy, original in Box 9, #13)

Photograph of group at table (copy, original in Box 9, #28)

## **Folder 15**

Funeral notice for Mrs. E. J. Thomson (1902)

Large photocopied horse and jack advertisements (2) (1858 advertisement listed by R.A. Bridgwater, and 1875 advertisement listed by J. A. Bridgwater)

**Folder 16**

Robert Polk Thomson's holdings list and related correspondence; includes list of correspondents from collection (2002) (some portions not microfilmed, including a list of books held by Elizabeth Nelson Thomson & a letter from Howard McClellan Thomson to Dr. Robert Polk Thomson

**Folder 17**

Matthew Thomson's land sale from Clark County, Kentucky (1859) (not microfilmed)

**Folder 18**

Information regarding Robert Howard Thomson's death in 1919 (not microfilmed)

**Box 6: Music**

Piano book and sheet music

**Box 7: Photo album**

Thomson-Bridgwater family photo album; 36 photographs, many of which are labeled by name

**Box 8: Family Bible**

Mattie Bridgwater's 1897 Bible; includes some hand-written notes and genealogical information

**Box 9: Photographs**

1. James Nelson, III, check for no dates (all below)
2. Ella Katherine Thomson
3. James Nelson Thomson
4. Elizabeth Jane Nelson
5. Geo. Nelson Thomson
6. Lola Buth (also spelled Beeth)
7. Elizabeth Nelson Thomson
8. Matt N. Thomson
9. Home purchased in 1852 by Haynie Thomson of Clark County, Kentucky, in Wilson County, Tennessee. Built in 1842 by Col. Patrick Anderson
10. Home purchased in 1852 by Haynie Thomson (same site as above)
11. Matthew Neil(l) Thomson



12. Matthew Neill Thomson & bride Annie E. Turner (married Jan. 21, 1914)
13. Mattie Bridgwater
14. Samuel Patton Thomson & wife, Elizabeth A. Halley
15. Jas. Nelson II, husband of Theodocia Bush & father of Elizabeth Jane Nelson
16. Home of James Nelson, II & 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Rebecca Bush (Built 1839)
17. Matthew Neill Thomson, I
18. Andrew D. Thomson, son of Matt. Neill Thomson I & Jane Nelson
19. Elizabeth Boan (or Graen), married James Nelson, Sr.
20. Group photograph in front of Geo. Nelson Thomson's home in Rutherford County, Tennessee: Reid Thomson, unidentified African-American woman, Geo. Nelson Thomson, Andrew D. Thomson, and Chas. Foster Cox.
21. Matt Neill Thomson
22. 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Geography Class at Hendersonville School, 1914: Amos Rutherford, Mary Minor, Florence Wills, Rosie Wills, Horatio Thomson, Robbie Neville, and Harold Ellis
23. Samuel Patton Thomson
24. Group or family photograph taken in front of home
25. Hendersonville School House, 1915, on Drake's Creek near the Gallatin Highway
26. Dr. Robert Wood Thomson
27. Young girl in white dress
28. Group photograph of eleven people at a table drinking soda ("Golden Memories" written on the back)

**General vault collection, Box 1, VII-D-3v: Photographic negative (not microfilmed)**

1. Female figure in outdoor setting

**Box 10: Emma Bridgwater Thomson's scrapbook, mid 1880s (added late, but microfilmed on roll #4)**

1. Scrapbook includes newspaper clippings, polychrome political campaign cartoon, Victorian flower cuttings, snippets of hair from parents and siblings, etc.

Included in the collection & housed in the library (Catalogue # \_\_\_\_\_)

Stewart, Robert. *The American Farmer's Horse-Book*. Cincinnati: C. F. Vent & Co, 1867